

Message Text

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TAGS: SOPN (KISSINGER, HENRY A.)

SUBJECT: EVANS AND NOVAK: "THE COST OF KISSINGER'S
TRIUMPH"

FOR ANDERSON FROM S/PRS (FUNSETH)

NO. 39

FOLLOWING IS THE COMPLETE TEXT OF EVANS AND NOVAK COLUMN
PUBLISHED IN THIS MORNING'S WASHPOST, AUGUST 30:

"SECRETARY OF STATE HENRY A. KISSINGER'S LATEST TOUR DE
FORCE OF MID-EASTERN SHUTTLE DIPLOMACY HAS BROUGHT FROWNS
RATHER THAN SMILES TO HIGH OFFICIALS BACK IN WASHINGTON WHO
HAVE THIS PRIVATE COMPLAINT: WE HAVE PAID FAR TOO MUCH FOR
TOO LITTLE.

"THE SOURCE OF THEIR COMPLAINT IS SECRET AID ASSURANCES
MADE BY DR. KISSINGER TO ISRAELI AMBASSADOR SIMCHA DINITZ
IN WASHINGTON. ALTHOUGH ISRAEL'S BREATHTAKING NEW AID RE-
QUEST OF DOLLAR 3.3 BILLION FOR NEXT YEAR WILL SURELY NOT
BE MET, THE ISRAELIS AGREED TO A SIANI SETTLEMENT ONLY
AFTER A SECRET UNDERSTANDING THAT THEY WILL RECEIVE MORE
U.S. AID THAN EVER BEFORE -- PROBABLY BETWEEN DOLLAR 2.5
BILLION AND DOLLAR 3 BILLION.

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"THOUGHTFUL POLICY MAKERS HERE FRET BECAUSE THIS LAVISH EXPENDITURE HAS BOUGHT SO LITTLE. EVEN KISSINGER'S DEFENDERS CONCEDE PROGRESS ON THE SYRIAN FRONT IS UNLIKELY AND AN OVERALL SETTLEMENT NOT EVEN IMAGINABLE. RATHER, THERE IS FEAR HERE THAT THE AID PROMISED ISRAEL COULD SO DRASTICALLY DISTORT THE MIDEAST'S MILITARY POWER BALANCE, THAT THE LATEST KISSINGER TRIUMPH WILL, IRONICALLY REDUCE THE REGION'S STABILITY.

"ACCORDINGLY, UGLY QUESTIONS ARE BEING RAISED IN OFFICIAL WASHINGTON AS THE GOOD NEWS ROLLS IN FROM JERUSALEM AND CAIRO. DID KISSINGER PROMOTE A SINAI SETTLEMENT IN PRE-FERENCE TO A GENERAL MIDEAST PEACE CONFERENCE IN GENEVA MAINLY TO REFURBISH HIS OWN POLITICAL STANDING HERE? SUCH QUESTIONS, WHICH AN ANGRY KISSINGER IN PRIVATE ATTRIBUTES TO 'SICKNESS' IN WASHINGTON, ARE BEING RAISED NOT BY FANATICAL KISSINGER-HATERS BUT BY SOBER COLLEAGUES IN THE ADMINISTRATION.

"THE ANSWER TO KISSINGER'S MOTIVES DEPENDS ON JUST HOW LIKELY WAS A NEW SHOOTING WAR BETWEEN ISRAEL AND THE ARABS IF THERE WERE NO SINAI AGREEMENT. ALTHOUGH A FEW OFFICIALS BELIEVE THE DANGERS WAS NEGLIGIBLE, KISSINGER'S WARNING OF IMMINENT WAR IS ACCEPTED BY SOME OF HIS CRITICS. BUT EVEN WHILE GRANTING THE NECESSITY FOR THE LATEST KISSINGER SHUTTLE, THERE IS LITTLE ROOM FOR EXULTATION OVER ITS COST AND CONSEQUENCES.

"THE COST BECAME APPARENT ABOUT TWO WEEKS AGO WHEN ISRAEL RAISED THE ANTE ON ITS AID REQUEST TO THE EYE-POPPING DOLLAR 3.3 BILLION, INCLUDING SOME DOLLAR 2 BILLION IN U.S. MILITARY HARDWARE. ONE KEY U.S. OFFICIAL TOLD US CHANCES OF ISRAEL'S GETTING DOLLAR 3.3 BILLION ARE 'EXACTLY ZERO.' BUT ISRAELI MILITARY SPECIALISTS WHO VISITED HERE LAST WEEK UNDERSTAND THAT AND STILL ARE SATISFIED WITH KISSINGER'S UNREVEALED PROMISE.

"WHATEVER THE EXACT AMOUNT, ISRAEL IS SURE TO EMERGE FROM THE KISSINGER SHUTTLE WITH IMMENSE MILITARY SUPERIORITY IN THE MIDEAST. CONTRARY TO THE MISIMPRESSION AMONG THE UNCLASSIFIED

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U.S. PUBLIC AND CONGRESS, ISRAEL IS MUCH STRONGER MILITARILY TODAY THAN IT WAS ON THE EVE OF THE SURPRISE EGYPTIAN ATTACK IN OCTOBER 1973 AND COULD EASILY WIN A TWO-FRONT WAR. ANY EXTRA HARDWARE INCREASES THAT ADVANTAGE.

"CONSEQUENTLY, JUST HOW MUCH AID KISSINGER HAS PROMISED SECRETLY BECOMES CRITICAL. IF IT IS CLOSE TO THE REQUESTED DOLLAR 2 BILLION IN SOPHISTICATED HARDWARE, MILITARY

EXPERTS FEAR IT WOULD SO UNBALANCE ARMS IN THE MIDEAST THAT ARAB STATES WOULD BE PANICKED. THE RESULT COULD BE, IN THE SHORT RUN, ARABS RETURNING TO MOSCOW FOR ARMS, IN THE LONG RUN, WAR -- TWO CALAMITIES KISSINGER HAS TOILED FOR YEARS TO AVOID.

"YET, KISSINGER HAD TO GUARANTEE MUCH OF THE ISRAELI REQUEST TO AVOID OPPOSITION TO THE SINAI SETTLEMENT FROM SHIMON PERES, ISRAEL'S HAWKISH MINISTER OF DEFENSE. IN JUSTIFICATION, SUPPORTERS OF HEAVY ISRAELI AID SAY ISRAEL IS MORE SECURE AND MORE APT TO BE CONCILIATORY WITH A SOPHISTICATED ARMS SUPPLY ASSURED.

"PAST EXPERIENCE, HOWEVER, HAS INDICATED PRECISELY THE OPPOSITE: MILITARY SUPERIORITY DIRECTLY PROPORTIONATE TO ISRAELI INTRANSIGENCE AT THE BARGAINING TABLE. MOREOVER, CONSIDERING POPULAR ISRAELI OPPOSITION TO THE SINAI CONCESSIONS, THERE IS NO HOPE WHATEVER FOR SERIOUS NEGOTIATIONS ON THE SYRIAN FRONT. NOR DOES ANYBODY HERE BELIEVE THE SINAI SETTLEMENT LEADS ONE STEP CLOSER TO A SUCCESSFUL GENEVA CONFERENCE.

"MORE LIKELY, THE LATEST KISSINGER SHUTTLE MAY LEAD TO ANNUAL REPETITIONS OF MASSIVE ISRAELI ARMS REQUESTS. THE DOLLAR 3.3 BILLION IS NO ONE-TIME PROPOSAL. OFFICIALS HERE FEAR ISRAEL MIGHT WANT DOLLAR 3.5 BILLION TO DOLLAR 4 BILLION A YEAR INTO THE NEXT DECADE.

"THAT KISSINGER WILL BE RETURNING HOME FROM THIS SHUTTLE NOT IN FAILURE BUT WITH AN INITIALED AGREEMENT CARRIES SOME SIDE BENEFITS. IT MAY LEAD THE HOUSE TO REVERSE ITSELF ON TURKISH AID. CHANCES FOR CONGRESS' APPROVING HAWK MISSILES TO JORDAN WILL BE IMPROVED. AND HENRY UNCLASSIFIED

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KISSINGER WILL SEEM A LITTLE MORE LIKE THE DIPLOMATIC MIRACLE-MAKER OF YESTERYEAR.

"FOR HOW LONG? 'ABOUT ONE MONTH,' REPLIES ONE STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL, WHO SEES CONGRESSIONAL PROBING ON GRAIN SHIPMENTS TO RUSSIA, SALT AGREEMENTS AND CIA INTERVENTION IN CHILE QUICKLY PRESSING IN ON THE SECRETARY OF STATE.

"THE REASON FOR SUCH IMPERMANENCE IS THAT THE SECOND INTERIM SINAI AGREEMENT, LIKE THE BATTLE OF BLENHEIM, MAY WELL BE INTERPRETED AS A 'FAMOUS VICTORY' PURCHASED AT GREAT PRICE WITH MINIMAL EFFECT."

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